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AUTHOR Barkin, Florence
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ABSTRACT

Language switching (language alternation, code switching), the rapid alternation from one language to another, may or may not convey more than the cognitive significance of the message. Linguists have demonstrated the metaphorical or connotative significance of switching, but have not fully discussed the various forms switching takes. The present paper is the result of a careful analysis of both casual conversation speech of 33 bilingual Chicano migrant workers in Florida as well as their identifications of pictures from PLIM (Sapon: 1957) and a Sears catalogue. It intends to show how various sociolinguistic factors interact to determine switches ranging from isolated words in Spanish used out of necessity (lack of knowledge of the English word) to keenly purposeful switching intended to convey feelings of ethnic solidarity. These sociolinguistic factors include: (1) degree of migration, (2) degree of proficiency in each language, (3) place of birth, (4) length of time in the U.S., (5) education, (6) parents' birthplace, (7) spouse's birthplace, (8) future job aspirations, (9) awareness of linguistic norms of either or both languages, (10) ability to recognize which language is being spoken. (Author/CLK)

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Florence Barkin
Arizona State University

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Florence Barkin
Arizona State University

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Abstract

Language switching (language alternation; code switching), the rapid alternation from one language to another, may or may not convey more than the cognitive significance of the message. Linguists have demonstrated the metaphorical or connotative significance of switching, but have not fully discussed the various forms switching takes. The present paper is the result of a careful analysis of both casual conversation speech of 33 bilingual Chicano Migrant Workers in Florida as well as their identifications of pictures from PLIM (Sapon: 1957) and a Sears Catalogue. It intends to show how various sociolinguistic factors:

1. degree of migration
2. degree of proficiency in each language
3. place of birth
4. length of time in the U.S.
5. education
6. parents' birthplace
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interact to determine switches ranging from isolated English words in Spanish used out of necessity (lack of knowledge of the English word), to keenly purposeful switching intended to convey feelings of ethnic solidarity.

The phenomenon of language alternation, referred to by Haugen (1956:50 ) as 'the alternate use of two languages without any phonetic or morphological integration but with a clean break at the lexeme boundary', has been discussed in terms of its structure, co-occurence rules, connotative significance and its degree of acceptability and distribution within speech communities. However, research correlating occurrences of switching with sociolinguistic data and analyzing its variations in form and function has until this point remained undone. This paper proposes to analyze language switching as a multifaceted phenomenon taking into consideration its different forms and functions determined both by intra- and extra- linguistic factors. Bolinger (1975: 340) points out that the term "code" although initially used to label the language variety found in speech communities that people can more or less voluntarily join, has been loosely used to refer to any variety that a speaker feels free to adopt for a particular purpose. He further notes (1975: 341) that codes may be referred to as jargons "especially by ousiders who have difficulty understanding them". We see their use among the specialized vocabularies of certain professions or occupations, such as physicians and lawyers, among criminals, such as pickpockets, as well as in casual communities such as children trying to fool other children by speaking pig Latin. More usually, they are found in communities that make fairly consistent use of their secret language to further private or antisocial activities, i.e. the Walbiri of Central Australia's male status secret language t$^{y}$iliwiri and the Hanunóo of the Philippines's courtship code. (Ibid: 343)

This paper, dealing with the use of unassimilated English words in Spanish either individually or in groups, looks upon Spanish and English in their various levels ranging from formal to informal, as two separate languages, rather than as codes. We specify particular cases of "code".[1] That is to say, when the two languages are alternately used in a deliberate manner, within the same utterance or group of utterances occuring in the same conversation, the communicative result represents a "code". Code-switching, therefore, only occurs when a speaker switches from the code (the alternate use of the two languages) to either English or Spanish, without the use of one while speaking the other. This may occur, for example, when someone new enters the room and/or when the topic, location or situation change.

In our investigation, we have discovered two basic categories of language switching, i.e. Mechanical switching or unconscious switching caused by a trigger word (Clyne, 1967) usually resulting from paradigmatic associations and Connotative Switching or switching that expresses certain sentiments of ethnic solidarity and/or intimacy.

Interestingly enough, the very process we have used to uncover these two categories of switching, sheds light on their differences. Initially, we began an investigation of the influence of English on the Spanish of bilingual Chicano migrant workers in Florida, only to find out that approaching the issue by interviews of a sociolinguistic nature and identifications of drawings from a pictorial questionnaire contributed only a few of the manifestations of the switching phenomenon to our study. Therefore, we sought out other methods of inquiry, specifically in an attempt to elicit 'casual' speech. With this in mind, we requested the help of a young

woman who had demonstrated interest in our study. Subsequently, she recorded numerous informal conversations providing more and varied data and leading us to further conclusions.

We discovered that the use of English in one area did not necessarily imply the use of English in the other. Thus, due in part to the diversity of our interviewing procedures, we were able to classify various factors that come into play in language alternation.

In order to understand the nature of our findings, it is necessary to look upon the alternate use of the two languages, whether it be isolated lexical items or English embeddings within Spanish utterances with their own internal syntactic structure, as a product of the speakers verbal repertoire which recognizes "interference" not as an outside phenomenon in which a bilingual utilizes two systems with one constantly pressuring the other, but rather as an integral part of the bilingual's communicative choices:

> the totality of linguistic forms regularly employed in the course of socially significant interaction ... in which the speakers select from a range of possible expressions. The verbal repertoire then contains all the accepted ways of formulating messages. It provides the weapons of everyday communication. Speakers choose among this arsenal in accordance with the meaning they wish to convey. (Gumperz, 1971:152)

Thus our informants' verbal repertoires, representing the numerous linguistic choices available to them, vary according to both intra and extra linguistic factors.

After dividing our linguistic data into two principal categories: 1.) unadapted or unassimilated loanwords or Mechanical switching or triggered, unconscious switching and 2.) English embeddings or Connotative switching, we compared our results with responses from the sociolinguistic

questionnaire. Therefore, we were able to differentiate between certain types of switching.

Within the category of Mechanical Switching, for example, we find that all of the informants (10/33) who utilized isolated English lexical items, were second generation Americans, had attended monolingual English schools and claimed to be more proficient in English on a formal academic level. Even so, not all of them switched in the same way.

One of our linguistic consultants (Informant 17) chose more unassimilated loanwords than any other speaker. She rapidly switched from one language to the other, although fully aware that the interview was to take place in Spanish. She often used English items to fill in unknown elements in her Spanish. An analysis of her use of unassimilated English words reveals examples of confusion and loss of linguistic bearings which result in her forgetting which language she was speaking.[2]

Michael Clyne in his study of German-English bilingualism in Australia discussed three types of triggering: Consequential, Anticipational and Contextual. Consequential triggering occurs because

> Certain words may constitute an overlapping area between two languages which causes the speaker to lose his linguistic bearings. He momentarily forgets which language he is speaking, and later utterances are automatically in the other language (i.e. the one in which the statement, sentence or conversation was not begun).

Anticipational triggering refers to (86)

> A speaker, thinking ahead to what he is about to say, will sometimes anticipate the use of a word that belongs to the overlapping area and which serves as a trigger-word. Either consciously or unconsciously the anticipation of that word may cause the speaker to transfer several words immediately before the uttering of the actual trigger-word. Sometimes the entire sentence or clause which has evidently been thought out in advance is adapted to the trigger-word and is thus uttered in English ...

Finally, contextual triggering (90):

> Often it is not any specific word or expression but the entire context of the situation that sets off triggering. Sometimes it is not clear whether it is the topic or a word-form connected with it that is responsible for the switch in language. (1967)

In the majority of examples of unassimilated loanwords in her Spanish (30), we see the occurrence of consequential triggering or English unadapted loanwords spurring on a chain of English words:

1) "una piña y aquí pudding y strawberries y bananas y una piña, cigarros"

2) "un plato, vasos y cuchara y trinche y cuchillo y napkins, y salt and pepper y un chicken y una bowl"[3]

In the first example we note the repetition of the Spanish word piña, reminding the speaker that she was speaking Spanish, and thus causing her to switch back to Spanish. In addition to frequent examples of consequential triggering, we discovered evidence of anticipational switching in her speech as well:

1) "three rabbits, un carrot, un dish, y milk ... " (this utterance followed a series of identifications in Spanish)

2) "elote y hojas con elote y four grains"

In these examples we note the use of English numbers before the nouns. In example 1, the anticipation of the English word rabbits unconsciously caused the speaker to use the English number three, while in example 2 we note four before the English grains. The English numbers preceding the English nouns emphasize the tightness of adjectives, particularly numbers, and the nouns they are modifying.

Just as the previous informant never switched contextually, the next informant rarely switched consequentially or anticipationally. Rather

she switched according to the context:

1) "Unas mujeres este ... jugando carreras mapeando ... hace una commercial"

2) "un queque que dice Happy Birthday con velas y muchas decorations"

3) "una mujer jugando tennis" (occured 8 times in the speech of informants)

4) "un hombre jugando golf" (occured 7 times in the speech of informants)

The first example refers to an advertisement about two women racing to mop a floor. Many of the informants were familiar with the ad. The concept of a commercial itself, as well as the particular advertisement in question both represented an American (English) context. In the second example, the informant was looking at a picture of a child celebrating his birthday in front of a large cake which said "Happy Birthday" on it. To this informant, as well as to three others, this particular representation of a birthday celebration with a large whipped cream cake with candles on it was typically American. Interestingly enough queque, quequi and cake were among the most common loanwords in our corpus. The third and fourth examples reveal the common use of the unassimilated English words for the names of sports. Adaptations of these words frequently occured in the community's speech. These games represent American institutions in our informants' eyes despite their popularity throughout the world. Surprisingly, many informants preferred the unassimilated English loanwords to their Spanish equivalents so close phonetically to the English cognates. We also found examples of [gólfo] as well as [gálf] .[4]

While informants who switched mechanically often indicated their preference for anticipational, consequential or contextual triggering, so

informants who switched connotatively also followed certain patterns while switching.

This latter group of informants are bilinguals born in the United States. Some have decided to settle in Florida, all have participated in bilingual programs either in Texas or in Florida. These speakers were aware of the linguistic norms of at least one of the two languages and were sensitive to the separate identity of Spanish and English. Consequently, if they used elements of one while speaking the other during the pictorial interview, they prefaced their switch by either pausing or explaining their reasons. Nevertheless, when switching for connotative purposes, in intimate or casual contexts, they neither hesitated nor apologized for their switch. According to Gumperz and Hernández-Ch. (1972:56) sentences including as many as three switches are not rare. We found that the resultant code, carrying social significance, is represented by a vacillating linguistic structure whose nature and occurrence is determined by context, communicative occasion, registers (degree of formality), and role relationships of the speakers involved. Reputation, or the value placed on it by society, may also come into play. Let us examine the following examples of connotative language alternation or the "code" Spanish-English: (Spanglish?)

Jorge: Hey, Luis, when you gonna play baseball?
Luis : No sé cuando.
Jorge: ¿Cuándo vas a ir?
Luis : Mañana
Jorge: I wanna go.
Luis : What you gonna do ¿Qué vas a hacer, hey?

Here, from the very beginning we are able to determine the nature of the role relationship between the two boys. The register is casual, or possibly intimate. We determine that first by Jorge's use of "Hey" and second by his "gonna". Naturally, gestures and intonation also contribute to the

tone? The casual situation, which allows for ultimate freedom in alternating languages, has been set. Luis doesn't hesitate in responding in Spanish to Jorge's initial English question. Jorge follows in Spanish, beginning with same word, cuando, but this time in the form of a question. Luis maintains his Spanish while answering. However, Jorge finally reverts to the English of his initial utterance. Luis, for the first time replies in English but proceeds to translate his question into Spanish. This particular dialogue sheds light on a number of aspects of the switching phenomenon through its use of the initial attention-getting devise, "hey", acknowledgment or response to comment in the same language used by the previous speaker, use of tag question "¿hey?" within the Spanish utterance, and repetition of a previous statement or question in the other language. Language switching, rather than occurring within a sentence, more commonly occurred at sentence boundaries, or in the case of the last "¿hey?" following a pause. Along with the particular structural aspects of this dialogue, we note the interplay of a number of factors such as: 1) the creation of a certain social situation which becomes clear through the choice of topic 2) the relaxing atmosphere of the picnic and the baseball game which is to follow 3) mild, friendly sarcasm at the unfortunate situation that Jorge will be unable to accompany Luis tomorrow (expressed by the tag question "¿hey?), where the switch does not cause a change in the conversation's content, but rather conveys a new connotation of sarcasm because of the inability to change an already planned event.

In all of the dialogues, we find this curious alternation at sentence boundaries or following a change in speaker. There is a curious balance between the two languages, where neither language dominates. However, in this case of an extended monologue within a conversation we note different

switching markers:[7]

> He hated it. Se acabó el agua and sometimes they'd be taking a bath and se acaba el agua. In some hotels, tiene que flush the toilets echándole agua. So dice que he had a terrible time ya know.

Spanish represents only about one third of the words in the monologue. Of the 14 words appearing in Spanish, we find 5 have been repeated, i.e. se, acabó (a), el agua, tiene que, dice que whereas only 3 of the 25 English were repeated, i.e. "he", "a", and "and". Only five words contribute to the actual content of the message, whereas, the others represent either fixed expressions (dice que, tiene que), or repetitions (se acabó el agua).[8] Both the English and Spanish words represent both content and function words. Content words (as lexical words are often called) contain more meaning than function words. Bolinger (1975:121) notes that function words are used relatively more often than content words to point to elements in language or to the roles of speakers and hearers, and less often to point to things and events in the real world. They are relatively fewer than lexical words. The content of the monologue was expressed almost entirely in English, while the connotative aspects were aluded to by transitions such as, tiene que and dice que, fixed expressions, normally part of the bilingual's style when speaking English. Gumperz and Hernández-Ch. (1971: 310) compare these to Yiddish expressions like nebbish, and oi gewalt characteristic of in-group English style of some American Jews. Rather than contributing to the content of the message they function as stylistic ethnic identity markers.[9]

In conclusion, we have discovered two principal categories of switching, differing both in form and function. Mechanical switching, principally occurring in the speech of informants unaware or unphased by the linguistic

boundaries and/or norms of Spanish and English, serves to fill in unknown lexical items in the pictorial questionnaire. Its various manifestations are dictated by both the context and/or the structure of a particular utterance. Individual speakers may show unconscious preference for either anticipational, consequential or contextual triggering. All utterances remain basically Spanish, with isolated English lexical items filling in for a Spanish equivalent. On the other hand, Connotative or deliberate switching, occurring in the speech of informants who have participated in bilingual programs and who are acutely aware of the linguistic norms of either or both languages and who seldom call upon English words while identifying pictures in the pictorial questionnaire, is used purposefully to convey more than the content of the message. Its manifestations range from mere responses in the language of the previous utterance to intricate mixtures principally dominated by fixed expressions and function words in one language (Spanish) within a majority of content words in the other (English).[10] Although the results of the switch from one language to the other represent a "code", we see no syntactic irregularities in either language, and often are able to state which is the base or borrowing language and which the subordinate or lending language.

## NOTES

[1]In a recent article (Barkin, 1976b) I redefined "code" as: "the result of the switching process (the utterances in which both languages or dialects are found), since that result implies many of the in-group connotations of a code."

[2]The aforementioned article prints out the importance of a speaker's linguistic norm awareness in determining the type of switching, if any, that might occur. Informant 17 is clearly an example of a speaker unaware of the linguistic boundaries between Spanish and English.

[3]In my dissertation (Barkin, 1976a) I devoted a significant section to gender assignment of loanwords.

[4]The above dissertation (p.202) acknowledges the occurrence of unassimilated [galf] 7 times and [galf bɔl] 4 times, partly assimflated [goulf] once, and wholly assimilated [golfo] twice.

[5]These factors may be equally as important in determining the nature of switching to the "code".

[6]Dialogues of this nature deal with some present of future event. In addition, they include the speakers themselves who are discussing their involvement in the activities. (first and second person)

[7]This narrative, about her friend's trip to Mexico as opposed to the dialogues previously mentioned where present or future events are discussed, relates something that has occurred already. In addition the speaker is relating the experiences of a third person.

[8]Nevertheless, we must realize that these elements, se acabó (a) el agua, are essential to the understanding of the narrative.

[9]The repetition itself of se acabó (a) el agua serves a similar function here and therefore transcends the border between content words (or lexical, terms) and function words, eventhough the words themselves according to Bolinger's definition (1975:121), represent content words.

[10]It might prove informative to conduct a similar investigation in English in order to examine the reasons for the occurrence of (if any) unassimilated Spanish words. For example, would the same informants who switched into English when identifying drawings in the pictorial questions continue to switch and if so would it be in the same ways, ie. consequentially, anticipationally and contextually? Which informants, if any, when switching connotatively would choose Spanish as their base or borrowing language and English as their subordinate or lending language? Although many sociolinguistic features such as age, occupation, birth place, degree of education, length of time in the U.S., parents and spouses birthplaces, future job aspirations, awareness of linguistic norms of either or both languages and ability to recognize which language is being spoken were considered, their interaction, when related to the English linguistic data, may reveal even more facets of the switching phenomenon.

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